

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9126

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, BL

SUBJECT: GOB INQUIRY ON U.S. SUPPORT FOR HOLDING 1977

IDB BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING IN LA PAZ

1. MINISTRY OF FINANCE HAS ASKED EMBASSY INFORMALLY WHETHER USG WILL SUPPORT HOLDING 1977 IDB BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING IN LA PAZ. ACCORDING TO MINISTRY, 1973 IDB MEETING AGREED ON BOLIVIA AS SITE FOR 1976 MEETING, BUT GOB STEPPED ASIDE AS RESULT OF USG INTEREST IN HAVING MEETING DURING BICENTENNIAL. 1976 MEETING WAS LATER SCHEDULED FOR EL SALVADOR, THEN SHIFTED TO MEXICO BECAUSE OF EL SALVADOR'S UNPREPAREDNESS. GOB NOW CONCERNED ABOUT EL SALVADOR MAKING BID FOR 1977 MEETING.

2. LOCAL IDB REPRESENTATIVE, LEMPIRA BONILLA, HAS CONFIRMED TO US THAT IDB HAS COMMITMENT TO BOLIVIA FOR 1977, BUT HE RAISED QUESTION OF WHETHER THE MAJOR HOTEL CONSTRUCTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM PRESENTLY UNDERWAY IN LA PAZ WILL BE COMPLETED IN TIME TO HOUSE 1977 MEETING. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 413 CLASS A HOTEL ROOMS IN LA PAZ, WITH PRESENT PROJECTS SCHEDULED TO ADD 612 CLASS A ROOMS IN 1976. NEW SHERATON HOTEL (360 ROOMS) IS BEHIND SCHEDULE BUT STILL EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN MID-TO-LATE 1976. ACCORDING TO BONILLA SELECTED AT THE 1976 MEETING IN MEXICO, AN IDB EVALUATION TEAM WOULD LATER VISIT LA PAZ TO DETERMINE PREPAREDNESS FOR HOLDING MEETING IN 1977.

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3. BOLIVIA'S NEWFOUND POLITICAL STABILITY AND STRONG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORT, AS WELL AS EXPANDING IDB PROGRAM (US\$ 65.7

MILLION IN NEW PROJECT LOANS SIGNED THIS YEAR, WITH A US \$45 MILLION ROAD LOAN SCHEDULED FOR SIGNATURE IN EARLY 1976) ARGUE IN FAVOR OF BOLIVIA AS SITE IN 1977. PRESTIGE OF MEETING WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO GROWING SENSE OF CONFIDENCE IN BOLIVIA'S ABILITY TO OVERCOME ITS DECADES-LONG LEGACY OF POLITICAL/ECONOMIC INSTABILITY. ONE BOLIVIAN OFFICIAL HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IDB PROGRAMS WOULD NOT PROGRESS ADEQUATELY BY 1977 AND THIS WOULD EMBARRASS GOB. HOWEVER, WE THINK GOB IS SUFFICIENTLY DYNAMIC THAT SCHEDULING MEETING FOR 1977 WOULD MOTIVATE IT TO IMPROVE AND ACCELERATE ITS EXECUTION OF IDB AND PROBABLY OTHER FOREIGN-ASSISTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. ON THIS BASIS EMBASSY STRONGLY SUPPORTS LA PAZ AS 1977 SITE PROVIDED GOB DEMONSTRATES THAT IT WILL HAVE THE PHYSICAL FACILITIES.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS WASHINGTON VIEWS ON USG SUPPORT AT 1976 IDB MEETING IN MEXICO FOR HOLDING 1977 MEETING IN LA PAZ.
STEDMAN

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